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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/862,997	05/23/2001	Satoshi Yuzawa	525/50004	7506

7590 02/08/2006  
CROWELL & MORING, L.L.P.  
P.O. Box 14300  
Washington, DC 20044-4300

EXAMINER

NEGRON, ISMAEL

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2875

DATE MAILED: 02/08/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Advisory Action  
Before the Filing of an Appeal Brief**

Application No.

09/862,997

Applicant(s)

YUZAWA ET AL.

Examiner

Ismael Negron

Art Unit

2875

**--The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**

THE REPLY FILED 27 January 2006 FAILS TO PLACE THIS APPLICATION IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE.

1. ☒ The reply was filed after a final rejection, but prior to or on the same day as filing a Notice of Appeal. To avoid abandonment of this application, applicant must timely file one of the following replies: (1) an amendment, affidavit, or other evidence, which places the application in condition for allowance; (2) a Notice of Appeal (with appeal fee) in compliance with 37 CFR 41.31; or (3) a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in compliance with 37 CFR 1.114. The reply must be filed within one of the following time periods:

- a) ☐ The period for reply expires \_\_\_\_\_ months from the mailing date of the final rejection.  
b) ☐ The period for reply expires on: (1) the mailing date of this Advisory Action, or (2) the date set forth in the final rejection, whichever is later. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of the final rejection.

Examiner Note: If box 1 is checked, check either box (a) or (b). ONLY CHECK BOX (b) WHEN THE FIRST REPLY WAS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE FINAL REJECTION. See MPEP 706.07(f).

Extensions of time may be obtained under 37 CFR 1.136(a). The date on which the petition under 37 CFR 1.136(a) and the appropriate extension fee have been filed is the date for purposes of determining the period of extension and the corresponding amount of the fee. The appropriate extension fee under 37 CFR 1.17(a) is calculated from: (1) the expiration date of the shortened statutory period for reply originally set in the final Office action; or (2) as set forth in (b) above, if checked. Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of the final rejection, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**NOTICE OF APPEAL**

2. ☐ The Notice of Appeal was filed on \_\_\_\_\_. A brief in compliance with 37 CFR 41.37 must be filed within two months of the date of filing the Notice of Appeal (37 CFR 41.37(a)), or any extension thereof (37 CFR 41.37(e)), to avoid dismissal of the appeal. Since a Notice of Appeal has been filed, any reply must be filed within the time period set forth in 37 CFR 41.37(a).

**AMENDMENTS**

3. ☒ The proposed amendment(s) filed after a final rejection, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because  
(a) ☐ They raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search (see NOTE below);  
(b) ☐ They raise the issue of new matter (see NOTE below);  
(c) ☒ They are not deemed to place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal; and/or  
(d) ☐ They present additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims.

NOTE: \_\_\_\_\_. (See 37 CFR 1.116 and 41.33(a)).

4. ☐ The amendments are not in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121. See attached Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment (PTOL-324).  
5. ☐ Applicant's reply has overcome the following rejection(s): \_\_\_\_\_.  
6. ☐ Newly proposed or amended claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ would be allowable if submitted in a separate, timely filed amendment canceling the non-allowable claim(s).  
7. ☒ For purposes of appeal, the proposed amendment(s): a) ☒ will not be entered, or b) ☐ will be entered and an explanation of how the new or amended claims would be rejected is provided below or appended.  
The status of the claim(s) is (or will be) as follows:  
Claim(s) allowed: \_\_\_\_\_.  
Claim(s) objected to: \_\_\_\_\_.  
Claim(s) rejected: 17-27.  
Claim(s) withdrawn from consideration: \_\_\_\_\_.

**AFFIDAVIT OR OTHER EVIDENCE**

8. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence filed after a final action, but before or on the date of filing a Notice of Appeal will not be entered because applicant failed to provide a showing of good and sufficient reasons why the affidavit or other evidence is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 1.116(e).  
9. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence filed after the date of filing a Notice of Appeal, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because the affidavit or other evidence failed to overcome all rejections under appeal and/or appellant fails to provide a showing of good and sufficient reasons why it is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 41.33(d)(1).  
10. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence is entered. An explanation of the status of the claims after entry is below or attached.

**REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION/OTHER**

11. ☐ The request for reconsideration has been considered but does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because: \_\_\_\_\_.  
12. ☐ Note the attached Information Disclosure Statement(s). (PTO/SB/08 or PTO-1449) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_.  
13. ☒ Other: See attached Detailed Action.

***Response to Arguments***

1. Applicant's arguments filed January 27, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

2. Regarding the Examiner's rejection of Claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over LENDERINK (U.S. Pat. 5,194,310), the applicant argues that the cited reference fails to disclose all the features of the claimed invention, specifically a transparent reinforcing member interposed between the veneer and the substrate. The applicant further argues that the member located between the veneer and the substrate in the patented structure of LENDERINK is merely an adhesive layer.

3. In response to applicant's arguments that LENDERINK failed to disclose individually, or even suggest, a transparent reinforcing member, the applicant is respectfully advised that while the claims of issued patents are interpreted in light of the specification, prosecution history, prior art and other claims, this is not the mode of claim interpretation to be applied during examination. During examination, the claims must be interpreted as broadly as their terms reasonably allow. *In re American Academy of Science Tech Center*, 70 USPQ2d 1827 (Fed. Cir. May 13, 2004).

In this case, as detailed in Section 8 of the previous Office Action (mailed November 1, 2005), LENDERINK discloses a decorative article having a light permeable wood veneer 10, a substrate 11 and a bonding layer 12, such transparent member being interposed between the veneer and the substrate (as seen in Figure 1). LENDERINK further discloses that the bonding material must maintain its ability to

effectively hold together the thin veneer 10 and the substrate 12 during repeated flexing (see column 3, lines 2-7).

Layer 12 of LENDERINK was broadly considered to meet the “*reinforcing member*” limitation, as it is clear from the disclosure of LENDERINK that such layer must perform a reinforcing function to the veneer 10 and substrate 11 to enable the veneer/substrate combination to withstand repeated flexing without resulting in visible rupture lines.

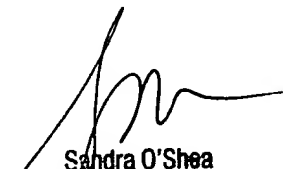
Even if, in arguendo, the disclosure of LENDERINK was silent as to the reinforcing functions of layer 12, applicant's comments that adding a reinforcing member to the patented structure would be contrary to the intentions of LENDERINK are in error. The applicant appears to believe that a reinforcing a structure necessarily results in such reinforced structure being rigid, however, that is not true. A flexible structure could be reinforced and retain a desired flexibility.

### ***Conclusion***

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ismael Negrón whose telephone number is (571) 272-2376. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sandra L. O'Shea, can be reached on (571) 272-2378. The facsimile machine number for the Art Group is (571) 273-8300.

5. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, go to <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) toll-free at 866-217-9197.



Sandra O'Shea  
Supervisory Patent Examiner  
Technology Center 2800



Ismael Negrón  
Examiner  
AU 2875